e-District Project

Uttar Pradesh

e-District pilot project in six districts of Uttar Pradesh (Rae Bareli, Sitapur, Gorakhpur, Sultanpur, Gautam Budha Nagar & Ghaziabad) has been approved at the total outlay of Rs. 1891.84 lakhs. CeG is the State Designated Agency (SDA) for implementation of the project.

Bihar

e-District pilot project in 4 districts of Bihar has been approved of the total cost of Rs 11.48 crore for Nalanda, Madhubani, Aurangabad and at an outlay of Rs.274.32 lakhs for Gaya district.

Bihar State Electronics Development Corporation Limited (BSEDC Ltd) is the State Designated Agency (SDA) for implementation of the project.

Security audit of BSNL's network

3094. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had issued instructions to BSNL to conduct security audit of its network in view of concern over equipment supplied by Chinese vendor Huawei some months ago;

(b) if so, whether the task of security audit has since been completed by BSNL and presented report to Government; and

(c) if so, the details thereof/and further reaction of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT): (a) Sir, Department of Telecommunications had issued guidelines to BSNL in view of security concerns connected with BSNL's tenders for expansion of mobile services (2G and 3G) in various zones of the country. As per the guidelines BSNL has to undertake extensive security audit before operationalisation of all new systems, irrespective of origin of manufacturing. BSNL's tenders for expansion of mobile services (2G and 3G) in various zones have not materialized so far.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Telephone services in rural areas

†3095. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY:
SHRI PRABHAT JHA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has been facing various challenges in expanding telecom services in the rural areas of country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any step has been taken by Government to meet these challenges effectively; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Provision of telecom services in the rural areas of the country is not always an attractive business proposition for the telecom operators and the infrastructure providers because of various reasons which, *inter-alia*, are as under:

- Higher capital and operational costs.
- Accessibility, logistics and infrastructure issues pertaining to backhaul, towers, right of way clearance, poor power supply, etc.
- Scattered and isolated villages not connected by roads including difficult and hilly terrain.
- Law and order problem in disturbed and insurgency affected areas.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. In order to facilitate expansion of telecom facilities in rural and remote areas of the country, Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) is extending subsidy support to meet the viability gap of the telecom service providers under various schemes which *inter-alia* are:

- Support for setting up of 7436 shareable infrastructure towers in Phase-I.
- Provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in the remaining uncovered inhabitant villages by February 2011.
- Support for Rural Household Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs) in 1685 Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs) where cost of providing telephones is more than the revenue earned.

Further, the guidelines issued by the Government on sharing of infrastructure will facilitate reduction in the capital and operating expenditure of the Telecom service providers in rural areas.

Features of 3G technology

3096. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the salient features of 3G technology in telephony;

(b) the operators in the country who presently offer 3G telephony;